

will now be a period for the transaction of morning business until the hour of 12:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Under the previous order, the first 30 minutes will be controlled by the Republican leader or his designee.

The Senator from Texas.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I am aware of two speakers during our period, the minority period of 30 minutes in morning business. As a result, I ask unanimous consent to be allowed to speak for up to 20 minutes out of that 30-minute period of time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORNYN. I thank the Chair.

IRAQ

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I come to the floor this morning to express my concerns about the growing politicalization of the debate over the war in Iraq. The reason I am concerned is because I think the revolving door of resolutions we have seen emanating from Washington, DC, has caused confusion. Now, I would be happy if the confusion were limited to our enemies. But, unfortunately, I think that confusion extends to our allies and perhaps even to the troops who are now serving in that war-torn country.

I do not believe that confusion is called for; rather, clarity is what we ought to be producing here. But this revolving door of resolutions being produced by those primarily on the other side of the aisle has seemed to contribute to our inability to speak with one voice on the one subject where we ought to be speaking with one voice; that is, our Nation's security. We ought not to be playing politics of any kind when talking about the lives of our troops or the resolutions which might have the unintended consequence of undermining their morale or causing our friends and allies confusion as to whether we are willing to stay the course in this battle of wills. This is a battle of wills.

If my colleagues on the other side of the aisle feel so strongly—as some of them clearly do—about the conflict in Iraq, then I believe they have an obligation to cut off funding. We have at least two Senators who have offered those kinds of resolutions—Senator DODD and Senator FEINGOLD. I would put it this way: If my colleagues really believe all is lost in Iraq and there is no possible way to succeed, then I think Senators could justly reach the conclusion that the only moral decision would be to deny funding to send them into harm's way. But instead what we see is an uncontrollable desire to tinker with our military operations, deciding in some cases what individual Members of Congress think should be

done on the ground and then on the other hand what kind of decisions ought to be left to commanders. I suggest to my colleagues that strategy will lead us nowhere. Congress should not be involved in micromanaging the day-to-day tactics of military commanders on the ground. Our Constitution provides for a single Commander in Chief, not 535 chieftains who can make tactical decisions about something as sensitive and challenging as war operations in Iraq.

We have heard there are between 5,000 and 6,000 members of al-Qaida in Iraq, primarily in Anbar Province. It makes no sense to me for us to pull out our troops until we have defeated those terrorists. Certainly, I disagree with those who say we ought to pull out our troops before we are able to stabilize Iraq in a way that it can sustain itself, defend itself, and govern itself because I think we know what will happen if Iraq becomes just another failed state in the Middle East, particularly with those 5,000 to 6,000 members of al-Qaida present in Iraq: It will become another Afghanistan.

As we all know, when the Soviet Union left Afghanistan, Afghanistan became a failed state, giving rise to the Taliban and al-Qaida in Iraq, the likes of Osama bin Laden among them. Of course, it was because they had a safe haven in Afghanistan that they could then plot and plan and train and recruit and finance their terrorist operations, and it allows them the safety and convenience to plan an attack against the United States, which they did on September 11, 2001.

Of course, we know, because they have told us, that one of al-Qaida's major goals in Iraq is to increase sectarian violence between the Sunnis and the Shias. Al-Qaida cannot defeat us on the battlefield; we know that and they know that. The only way they can prevail is if we give up, if we pull our combat troops out of Iraq until al-Qaida is no longer a threat there. We know that Sunni extremists, including al-Qaida, want to create a civil war that will tear the country apart. The only way al-Qaida will be successful in doing that is if we allow them to do so.

We need to let our military do the job in Iraq. We can't pretend to be able to make the best decisions from here in Washington, DC, about what kinds of tactics are likely or reasonably calculated to be successful several thousand miles away.

As recently as Sunday, the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee appeared on a weekend talk show. I would like to read a little bit of the questions and answers which were produced from that interaction because I think it demonstrates exactly the kind of confusion I am talking about that I think ill-serves our troops and ill-serves our Nation during a time of war.

The question was this:

Will you set a goal for withdrawing combat troops?

Senator LEVIN says:

We would. We would follow basically the pattern that was set or proposed by the Iraq Study Group, which was to set a goal for the removal of combat troops, as you put it correctly, by March of next year.

Mr. Russert:

So how many troops would that be by March of next year would be taken out?

Mr. LEVIN said:

We don't have a specific number, nor did the study group, but it would be most. There would be a limited number of troops that would be left.

Mr. Russert said:

So out of 150,000, we would take out how many?

Mr. LEVIN:

I would say most.

Mr. Russert:

What would be left behind?

Senator LEVIN said:

It would be a limited number, which would—

Mr. Russert said:

Ten thousand, 20,000?

Senator LEVIN said:

I don't want to put a specific number on it because that really should be left to the commanders to decide how many would be needed to carry out these limited functions.

I think this brief Q-and-A demonstrates the kind of confusion that occurs when Members of the Senate, notwithstanding their best intentions, tinker with tactical decisions made with fighting a war several thousand miles away.

We know the power Congress has under our Constitution, and if, in fact, there are those, as I said earlier, who believe that all is lost, then I believe the only appropriate action to take would be for those people who hold that belief to try to bring a resolution to the floor that would cut off funding for this ill-fated, in their view, conflict. But my colleagues can't have it both ways. On the one hand, they can't say we should leave it to our commanders in the field to determine the number of troops, and yet when General Petraeus says he needs 21,500 troops to fight the terrorists in Iraq, these same individuals would tell him: No, you can't have them.

This is a question and answer from the nomination hearing for GEN David Petraeus.

Senator MCCAIN asked him:

Suppose we send you over there to your new job, General, only we tell you that you can't have any additional troops. Can you get your job done?

General Petraeus said:

No, sir.

The kind of confusion I think we have seen emanating from Capitol Hill is directly related to the revolving door of resolutions we have seen since the beginning of the year.

First, there was the Biden resolution. Senator REID, the distinguished majority leader, said, "Tomorrow the Senate will proceed to S. Con. Res. 2, the bipartisan Iraq resolution." He said that

on January 31, 2007. Then Senator REID said later the same day, "There will be a bipartisan group of Senators who believe the more appropriate matter is the Warner resolution."

So first we had the Biden resolution, then we had the Warner resolution, and then there was the Levin resolution. Senator REID said, on January 31, 2007, "In my caucus there was near unanimity for the Levin resolution." Then—I mentioned this a moment ago—there are those such as Senator FEINGOLD who said: "I oppose the weak Warner-Levin resolution as currently written because it misunderstands the situation in Iraq and shortchanges our national security interests." He said that on February 1.

Then there was the Reid-Pelosi resolution. This was the one on which the majority leader said, "I think it is so much more direct. We support the troops. We are opposed to the surge. Perfect." He was asked this question: I was asking you why you prefer the House resolution to move forward. This is the press asking the majority leader. He said, "I think it is so much more direct. We support the troops. We are opposed to the surge. Perfect." That is the majority leader on February 13, 2007.

Then one of the Democratic candidates for President, Senator CHRIS DODD of Connecticut, made this observation, and I happen to think he is exactly right. He said: "We have a sense of Senate resolution on asparagus. They don't mean a whole lot."

Well, I have heard a lot from my constituents back in Texas who just wonder what in the world are we doing here in Washington debating a series of non-binding resolutions. Senator DODD has it exactly right. To show the dignity of these nonbinding resolutions, we even have a Senate resolution on asparagus. It is demeaning and inappropriate, in my view, for us to be talking in those kinds of terms when it comes to something as serious as Iraq.

Then there was the Murtha plan, named after Representative JACK MURTHA, the Democrat from Pennsylvania. This is Representative MURTHA's plan. He said:

They won't be able to continue. They won't be able to do the deployment.

This is his plan.

They won't have the equipment, they won't have the training, and they won't be able to do the work. There is no question in my mind. We have analyzed this and we have come to the conclusion that it can't be done.

So this is what the Democrats in the House have had to offer in terms of resolutions: Let's not vote to cut off funding, but let's tie our troops in so much redtape and deny them the ability to be successful with the new plan the President has proposed in Iraq. That was on February 15.

Representative JIM COOPER, a Democrat from Tennessee, I think tagged it right, tagged Representative MURTHA's plan correctly. He said on MURTHA's clumsy strategy:

Congress has no business micromanaging a war, cutting off funding or even conditioning these funds.

That was what Representative JIM COOPER said on February 23 in the Washington Post.

Congressman CHET EDWARDS from my State of Texas, another Democrat, said:

If you strictly limit a commander's ability to rotate troops in and out of Iraq, that kind of inflexibility could put some missions and some troops at risk.

He said that on February 23 in the Washington Post.

The latest resolution, the Biden-Levin proposal, was described by Senator JOE BIDEN of Delaware, the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee in the Senate, another Democrat candidate for President: "And that resolution can be simply entitled: Revoke the authorization."

What he is talking about is revoking the authorization of the use of military force that Congress passed in 2001. He is talking about, in 2007, going back to 2001 and revoking the original authorization for use of military force that has resulted in 130,000 American troops currently in Iraq.

Senator BIDEN said this:

The next best step is to revoke the authorization the United States Congress gave to the President to go to war in the first place.

He said that in Des Moines, IA, on February 17.

Senator LEVIN, the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, a Democrat of Michigan, said:

We should limit the mission. One thought is that we should limit the mission to a support mission. In other words, an anti-terrorist mission to go after al-Qaida in Iraq, to support and train the Iraqi Army, to protect our own diplomatic personnel and other personnel in Iraq.

So Senator LEVIN's proposal would be to limit the mission, to put conditions on our troops and on the rules of engagement that would deny them the ability to be successful, if they were otherwise able to be successful. He said that on September 19.

Representative CHET EDWARDS, again of Texas, a Democrat, I think nailed it. He said:

I think Congress begins to skate on thin ice when we start to micromanage troop deployment and rotation.

He said that on February 23, 2007.

Then there are other resolutions by other candidates for President.

The Senator from Illinois, Mr. OBAMA, on his resolution said:

The time for waiting in Iraq is over. The days of our open-ended commitment must come to a close. The need to bring this war to an end is here, and that is why today I am introducing the Iraq War Deescalation Act of 2007.

That was on January 30, 2007. He wanted to cap troops who could be deployed into Iraq and opposed the President's plan.

Then Senator CLINTON, on her proposal, said:

I don't want to defund our troops, I am against that, but I want to defund Iraqi troops.

Just remember, a moment ago Senator LEVIN in his resolution said he wanted to train and equip the Iraqis, and now Senator CLINTON says she wants to defund the Iraqi troops. She said:

I want to defund the private security going for the Iraqi government if they don't meet these certain requirements.

She said that on FOX News, a special report with Brit Hume on January 18, 2007.

I could go on and on. I know the Senator from Florida is here and wants to speak on the same topic. But the plethora of resolutions that seem to be emanating from the other side of the aisle can't do anything but engender confusion about our aims in Iraq and in the Middle East, not only for our troops who put themselves in harm's way but for Iraqis who have allied themselves with us, who have helped us. I would think that out of the new majority, at least there ought to be a consensus on what it is we ought to be doing there, that we ought not to be leaving our troops with any doubt in their minds about our commitment to support them. We ought not to be leaving any of our friends in Iraq, who have allied themselves with us by helping us, to doubt, wondering whether we would pull our troops out precipitously and leave them exposed to a huge humanitarian crisis and a huge ethnic cleansing by the violence that would ensue.

My hope is we will give this new plan a chance. As the Iraq Study Group said, they believe they could support a surge, under appropriate conditions, on page 73 in that report—a bipartisan report of a group who have been given great weight in Congress. They have studied the issue and made recommendations to the President. The President has consulted broadly with a large number of people, military experts, people on both sides of the aisle, and has come up with not only a new commander but a new plan, and we have a new Secretary of Defense.

I fail to understand, and I cannot understand, why it is there are so many people who are determined to see that plan be unsuccessful by not providing the troops, by not providing the funding, and by tying our troops' hands with redtape, in terms of the rules of engagement and the conditions under which they fight.

Mr. President, I ask our colleagues on the other side of the aisle to work with us and come up with some plan that can have the support of the Members of Congress. As I said, it used to be that differences between political parties stopped at the water's edge, particularly on a matter so important as our national security. A confusing message is sent by these revolving-door resolutions that are mutually contradictory and inconsistent and do nothing to help us win the war there, to stabilize Iraq, and to bring our troops home as fast as we can.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Florida is recognized.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. President, I follow the remarks of my colleague from Texas regarding the situation in Iraq and our own situation as it relates to that effort. I wish to pick up on what he said, which is that for so long in the history of our Nation, politics ended at the water's edge. I wish we could go back to the days when we would look at our troops fighting overseas in an effort as significant as this is—the current war against radical Islam—as something that could unite us all as Americans, where we might shed party labels and also shed personal political ambition.

I cannot help but notice, as the Senator from Texas was recounting all of the various plans that have been proposed from the other side, that most of them seemed to come from those labeled as a Presidential candidate. It seems everybody tried to have a different nuance on yet another micromanaging strategy to satisfy their personal political goals.

So how do we serve our national interests best? We should not be fighting a war from the political landscape of Washington. That is a recipe for defeat. We should follow the strategy of General Petraeus, who is in the field, who is the allied commander of our troops in Iraq, who does believe the current strategy we are following is one that has a reasonable chance for success. There is no guarantee, but it has a reasonable chance for success. That strategy has now been unfolding for several days. There has been a change on the ground. It is a strategy I know many forget, but it has multiprunks to it. It is not just the military reinforcements over Baghdad and the Iraqi forces taking the lead in Baghdad with our support, but it also has a political and an economic component. The political component—and I had to look for it because it was not on the front page—was that the Iraqi Cabinet approved yesterday an oil-sharing agreement for their country, which now goes to the Iraqi Parliament for their approval. That is one of the key cornerstones of beginning to achieve a political settlement—reaching an accord on the sharing of oil revenue—so there can be a sense of nationhood, so there can be a coming together of the different factions within Iraq. It is a very important component of a political settlement. I know other settlements are being added to the military and, at the same time, we understand some of those folks we would not want to be partners with. There are elements from the old Baathist Army that can be incorporated. Most of these are Sunnis, which is leading to a greater sense of confidence in the Sunni population. We see shifting and changing on the ground. We see that al-Sadr is taking a slightly different approach. He is anti-American, but at the same time the streets of Baghdad seem to be a tad quieter.

We have a long way to go, but we are making some progress. I believe it is important we note even the small measures of progress. I know our troops on the ground, our brave men and women fighting in Iraq, do notice these changes and understand they make a difference in the lives of the Iraqis. When our men and women who volunteer to serve our Nation are deployed and they go into battle, they should never for a moment have any hesitation in their minds or wonder whether they will have the tools they need to successfully perform their mission while defending themselves and the civilians they are working to protect.

The concept of opposing the war but supporting our troops seems untenable, when part of that same plan is one that will not allow reinforcements into battle, will not allow the equipment necessary, and has been described as a slow-bleed strategy. That kind of a strategy accomplishes nothing toward victory, and it does damage our troops, their morale and their mission.

Our President is the Commander in Chief. He is the leader of our Nation's military. Congress voted to authorize the President under the present circumstances. Resolutions in Washington of all flavors and varieties might make for good politics, but they do not make good sense as a military policy and a strategy for success. We only have one Commander in Chief at a time. Our Nation only has one Commander in Chief, and to micromanage our troops in the field is not what was ever intended by the constitutional responsibilities that divide the powers within our Government.

My colleague from Texas talked about Chairman LEVIN's comments. He made other comments in that interview. This was Sunday on "Meet The Press." He said:

We are trying to tie the hands of the President and his policy.

I will repeat that:

We are trying to tie the hands of the President and his policy. We are trying to change the policy. And if someone wants to call that "tying the hands" instead of changing policy, yes, the President needs a check and balance.

I don't think that is a check and balance that was envisioned by our Constitution and Founding Fathers—tying the hands of the Commander in Chief in a time of war, while our troops are deployed and are shedding blood in battle. That is not what our Constitution ever intended.

Is it appropriate for Congress to tie the hands of the Commander in Chief in a time of war? I would say no. I believe most Floridians would agree with that—that this is not the time to tie the hands of the Commander in Chief. Should we keep the Commander in Chief from reinforcing our troops? In the judgment of military leaders, such as General Petraeus, the reinforcements are necessary, needed, and they are part of what will give us an oppor-

tunity for success. Should we keep the Commander in Chief from reinforcing these troops? The answer to that is also no. Under article I, section 8, of the Constitution, with regard to the Armed Forces, Congress is given the power of the purse and only the power of the purse. We have the responsibility to fully provide funding for our military forces, especially when they are at war and in harm's way, defending our Nation.

So what is the President's role in all of this? Article II, section 2, of the Constitution says the President is the "Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States." He has command over the Armed Forces. He has the power and authority to deploy troops. He has the power and authority to direct military campaigns during wartime. For the Congress to tie the President's hands is not the right thing to do. It is outside the scope of what the Congress is supposed to do. This is not the checks and balances intended by our Founding Fathers. In a time of war, the Congress should only support our President, try to unite behind our troops and unite behind our effort. Our job is not to micromanage the handling of a war.

Another theory that has been advanced is we should continue to fight al-Qaida but not be involved in a civil war. I have not understood how we can have a strategy in a place that is as complex as Iraq is today to fight against one set of insurgents and not against another. We do know that a chaotic Iraq would be nothing but a haven for al-Qaida. We know that al-Qaida is resurging and reorganizing; our recent intelligence reports indicate that. Nothing would be more appealing or pleasing to them than to, first of all, validate their strategy, which is to create such an uproar in American politics through the deaths of our men and women in uniform and to end the resolve of our Nation so we would not continue to be steadfast in our resolve. This has been their avowed and professed strategy.

I believe for us to do anything other than continue forward in this hopeful effort for a victorious outcome would be nothing short of giving in to al-Qaida's strategy—their professed strategy. There is only one option, which has to do with the funding of our troops. I go back to the Gregg resolution. Senator GREGG had a resolution, and it was simply that we would support our troops. Our troops are in battle; we are in a time of war. This Congress sent them into battle by allowing the President to have the authority to do so. So at this time, the only resolution that I think is appropriate is the Gregg resolution, which has been discussed but not debated on the floor of the Senate. I look forward to an opportunity to have a full debate on that resolution. Hopefully, the leadership will allow it to come to the floor for a full debate and a vote.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the

next 30 minutes will be under the control of the majority leader or his designee.

The Democratic whip is recognized.

IRAQ

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I am glad we are discussing this issue. I am glad we are on the floor of the Senate to discuss the war in Iraq. I think this is an issue that is being discussed across America—over coffee pots in offices, in doughnut shops in the morning, at schools, in living rooms, and in churches. Everybody is thinking about this war, as they should. Those of us who are fortunate enough to live in the safety of America know full well that we have over 130,000 of our best and bravest sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, risking their lives at this very moment in Iraq.

I have listened carefully to my colleagues from the other side of the aisle as they have come to the floor, including the last two, Senator CORNYN of Texas and Senator MARTINEZ of Florida. I have the highest respect for both of my colleagues. I count them as friends. I work with them on many issues. I respectfully disagree with them on their views on this war.

Senator CORNYN mentioned earlier he felt there should be a consensus among Democrats about what to do with this war, that if we have 50 or 51 Members on the floor, we ought to have a point of view. I say to the Senator from Texas that there are some things we agree on, on this side of the aisle. For example, when there was a vote 10 or 11 days ago on whether we should escalate the number of troops we are sending to Iraq, whether we should follow the President's proposed plan to send anywhere from 21,000 to 48,000 more soldiers into harm's way, 49 of 50 Democrats voted no.

We were joined by seven Republicans who crossed the aisle. Is there a consensus on the Democratic side on the President's plan? Yes. And it isn't just a consensus on the Democratic side; it is a consensus across the Nation.

This morning's Washington Post on the front page has the disclosure of an ABC News poll. Some 53 percent of the American people think it is time for a deadline for withdrawing forces from Iraq, and an overwhelming majority think the President's strategy is wrong.

To argue that the Democrats don't have a consensus position is not an accurate statement. It does not reflect what occurred in a vote that just took place a few days ago.

I am also troubled by the continuing reference to support of our troops. May I put that to rest for just a moment. Twenty-three of us in the Senate voted against this war in Iraq—1 Republican and 22 Democrats. But I will tell you, Mr. President, when the President came and then asked for funds to support our troops in Iraq, this Senator,

and the overwhelming majority of those of us who oppose the policy, gave the President every penny he asked for. Our thinking was very clear: Though we may disagree with the policy, we can't put the burden of what we consider bad policy on the backs of our soldiers. We cannot shortchange them in any way in battle, even if we disagree with the battle plan of the Commander in Chief. So I voted not for \$1 billion, not for \$100 billion, but hundreds of billions of dollars for this war that I think is the wrong war. Why? Quite simply, if it were my son or daughter in uniform in this war risking his life, I would want him to have everything necessary to be safe and to come back home safely.

So, yes, we support our troops. Whether we disagree with this foreign policy or agree with it, Members of the Senate support our troops. But one cannot overlook the obvious. When it comes to the support of our troops, it goes way beyond a speech on the floor of the Senate.

On Sunday, February 18, Dana Priest and Anne Hull of the Washington Post wrote an article which has seared the conscious of America. It was part of a series about a military hospital, Walter Reed. I visited that hospital many times to visit our soldiers, marines, airmen, and sailors who were in recovery. I have been so impressed with the men and women, the medical professionals who perform medical miracles for these men and women who come home injured from the wars.

I listen to the soldiers and their families, and they are so grateful for what they have received at Walter Reed. As the article says at one point, Walter Reed has always been viewed as "a surgical hospital that shines as the crown jewel of military medicine." And so it should be. Our men and women in uniform who have made the sacrifice deserve the very best.

If that were the message of this series in the Washington Post, it wouldn't have been noted or remembered by anyone because it would have been repeating the obvious. But, sadly, this series tells us something different.

Just a few minutes' drive away from where we are meeting in this Senate Chamber, at Walter Reed Hospital, there are buildings which are in deplorable condition. There are veterans and soldiers who are being treated in ways that are absolutely unacceptable. Let me quote a few words from this series in the Washington Post describing one of the buildings at Walter Reed Hospital:

... [P]art of the wall is torn and hangs in the air, weighted down with black mold. . . . Signs of neglect are everywhere: mouse droppings, belly-up cockroaches, stained carpet, cheap mattresses.

The article goes on to say:

The common perception of Walter Reed is as a surgical hospital that shines as the crown jewel of military medicine. But 5½ years of sustained combat have transformed the venerable 113-acre institution into some-

thing else entirely—a holding ground for physically and psychologically damaged outpatients. Almost 700 of them—the majority soldiers, but some Marines—have been released from hospital beds but still need treatment or are awaiting bureaucratic decisions before being discharged or returned to active duty.

They suffer from brain injuries, severed arms and legs, organ and back damage, and various degrees of post-traumatic stress. Their legions have grown so exponentially—they outnumber hospital patients at Walter Reed 17 to 1—that they take up every available bed on post and spill into dozens of nearby hotels and apartments leased by the Army. The average stay is 10 months, but some have been stuck there for as long as two years.

Disengaged clerks, unqualified platoon sergeants and overworked case managers fumble with simple needs: feeding soldiers' families who are close to poverty, replacing a uniform ripped off by medics in the desert sand or helping a brain-damaged soldier remember his next appointment.

Here is a quote from Marine SGT Ryan Groves, 26 years old, an amputee who lived at Walter Reed for 16 months. Here is what he says:

We've done our duty. We fought the war. We came home wounded. Fine. But whoever the people are back here who are supposed to give us the easy transition should be doing it. . . . We don't know what to do. The people who are supposed to know don't have the answers. It's a nonstop process of stalling.

Walter Reed Hospital, the crown jewel of medical care for our soldiers who are giving everything in Iraq.

So now let's ask the question: Who is working to support our troops? Who is working at Walter Reed to support our troops? Rhetoric is easy on the floor of the Senate, but for these troops and for the families, it will take more than words of loyalty and respect.

I can recall when this debate started. As a Senator, I faced the toughest vote any Senator can face—a vote on a war. You know at the end of the day, if you go forward with the war, people will die—not just the enemy but our brave soldiers, as well as many innocent people. It is the kind of vote that costs you sleep, and it should.

I remember it so well. It was October 11, 2002, within weeks of the election. We had been subjected to a steady barrage of statements from the President and the administration about why this war was necessary. We had been told of weapons of mass destruction which not only threatened the region but even threatened the United States. We had been told of a ruthless dictator in Saddam Hussein who had gassed and killed his own innocent people. We had been told there was a connection between Saddam Hussein and the terrible events of 9/11 in the United States. We had been told even of nuclear weapons and the possibility of mushroom-shaped clouds if we didn't respond, and quickly, in Iraq.

But what we were told turned out not to be true. What we were told as the reason for the war turned out to be wrong. I was a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee, and I sat behind closed doors at confidential hearings and heard disputed evidence about